



Chinese Junk "Amoy" in Richardson Bay, Sausalito.

Chinese Fishermen

Chinese immigrants arriving in California in 1849. They called it "Gum San" or Gold Mountain, and joined other immigrants in pursuit of riches in California's Gold Rush. After the Foreign Miners Tax of 1850 forced many Chinese out of the gold fields they returned to the San Francisco Bay and became fishermen. Their main catch was shrimp but they also took sturgeon, smelt, herring, abalone, and crab.

By 1875 there were 25 Chinese shrimp camps along the shores of San Francisco Bay. We do not know how these men used China Beach. It would have made a poor shrimp camp as the foggy weather would have made it difficult for shrimp to dry. The beach may have been an abalone gathering spot or a safe landing spot just outside of the Golden Gate.

Chinese made up 50% of all fishing crews in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1880s. Threatened by their success, non-Chinese fishermen relied on Anti-Chinese laws and discriminatory tactics to force their rivals out of Chinese in the industry. By the 1890s, only 20% of Bay fishers were Chinese, and the number continued to decrease through the rest of the century.